

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 3 to 5, 15 to 17 and 22 to 30 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and amend Claims 1, 2, 9 to 14, 20 and 21 as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, now read as follows:

1. (Currently amended) An information processing apparatus capable of controlling read operation of an original image by a scanner via a scanner driver, comprising:

determination means for comparing ~~determining by the scanner driver whether~~ digital watermark information is embedded as specific image data in image data read by the scanner with specific image data representing a specific image to determine a matching degree;

inquiry means for inquiring of a user whether or not to output, via a user interface, when it is determined that the read image data substantially matches the specific image data by said determination means; and

means for encrypting and storing log information including the type of specific image when an instruction to output is input via the user interface in response to the inquiry by said inquiry means

~~control means for controlling predetermined image processing for the read image data on the basis of a determination result by said determination means; and~~

~~storing means for storing a read processing status of the specific image data as log information.~~

2. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising process means for processing ~~wherein said control means processes~~ the read image data into image data different from the read image data when said determination means determines that the read image data substantially matches the specific image data.

3. to 5. (Canceled)

6. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the specific image data is data of an original image whose copying operation is prohibited by law.

7. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the specific image data is stored and managed in advance so as to be updateable.

8. (Original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the scanner can be connected via a local interface or a network interface.

9. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein ~~[[the]]~~ digital watermark information is embedded in the specific image data at a predetermined cycle.

10. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 2 ~~[[1]]~~, wherein the digital watermark information includes, as code information, information about the type of specific image ~~[[data]]~~, an issue country, an issue number, and a value.

11. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the log digital watermark information includes, as code invisible or visible information, information about the type of specific image, an issue country, an issue number, and a value.

12. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 2 [[1]], further comprising storage means for storing image data read by the scanner, wherein said process control means also processes the [[an]] image data stored in said storage means.

13. (Currently amended) An image processing method for an information processing apparatus capable of controlling read operation of an original image by a scanner via a scanner driver, comprising:

a determination step of comparing determining by the scanner driver whether digital watermark information is embedded as specific image data in image data read by the scanner with specific image data representing a specific image to determine a matching degree;

an inquiry step of inquiring of a user whether or not to output, via a user interface, when it is determined that the read image data substantially matches the specific image data in the determination step; and

a step of encrypting and storing log information including the type of specific image when an instruction to output is input via the user interface in response to the inquiry in said inquiry step

a control step of controlling predetermined image processing for the read image data on the basis of a determination result in the determination step; and

~~a storing step of storing a read processing status of the specific image data as log information.~~

14. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 13, further comprising a process step of ~~wherein the control step comprises~~ processing the read image data into image data different from the read image data when the image data is determined in the determination step to substantially match the specific image data.

15. to 17. (Canceled)

18. (Original) The method according to claim 13, wherein the specific image data is data of an original image whose copying operation is prohibited by law.

19. (Original) The method according to claim 13, wherein the specific image data is stored and managed in advance so as to be updateable.

20. (Currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium which stores a program for causing an information processing apparatus capable of controlling read operation of an original image by a scanner via a scanner driver, to execute:

a determination step of comparing ~~determining by the scanner driver whether~~ digital watermark information is embedded as specific image data in image data read by the scanner;[[,]]

an inquiry step of inquiring of a user whether or not to output, via a user interface,  
when it is determined that the read image data substantially matche the specific image data in the  
determination step; and

a step of encrypting and storing log information including the type of specific  
image when an instruction to output is input via the user interface in response to the inquiry in  
said inquiry step

~~a control step of controlling predetermined image processing for the read image~~  
~~data on the basis of a determination result in the determination step; and~~

~~a storing step of storing a read processing status of the specific image data as log~~  
~~information.~~

21. (Currently amended) The medium according to claim 20, further storing a  
program for causing the information processing apparatus to execute a process wherein the  
~~control step of comprises~~ processing the read image data into image data different from the read  
image data when the image data is determined in the determination step to substantially match  
the specific image data.

22. to 30. (Canceled)